

REMARKS

Prior to this Amendment, claims 2-11 were pending in this application. By the foregoing amendments, claim 2 is cancelled, claims 3, 5 and 8 are amended to depend on claim 6, and claims 6, 7 and 11 are rewritten in independent form.

Since claims 6 and 7 were indicated as containing allowable subject matter, and such claims are now rewritten in independent form, these claims are believed to be allowable, along with the claims that depend therefrom. Claim 11 is amended to recite that the cylindrical non-pinch seal portion is provided with a circular flange portion on an outer periphery thereof, as in claims 6 and 7, and thus claim 11 is also believed to be allowable.

Based on the foregoing amendments, the prior art rejections are believed to be rendered moot, and all of the claims are believed to be in condition for allowance.

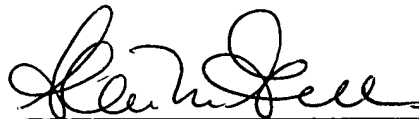
In view of the preceding amendments and remarks, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue that the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephonic interview, she is kindly requested to contact the undersigned attorney at the local telephone number listed below.

AMENDMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. §1.111
U.S. SERIAL NO. 09/988,670

ART UNIT 2831
Q67306

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all additional required fees (except the Issue Fee and/or the Publication Fee) to our Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,



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